

Long Island Sound Study
Management Committee Meeting Summary
Thursday, July 18, 2002
Stamford, Connecticut

Mark Tedesco called the meeting to order at 10:08AM, asking attendees to introduce themselves (see Attachment 1) Tedesco asked for changes to the April 18 meeting notes; as no changes were proposed, the notes were approved as written, and Tedesco proceeded to the following agenda items.

1. CAC Report

John Atkin reported that the CAC had approved four new organizational members: the Connecticut Audubon Coastal Center, Connecticut Fund for the Environment, Federated Conservationists of Westchester County and Nassau County Department of Public Works. The new list of CAC members had been included in the meeting packet, and Atkin made available the list to those present at the meeting. Atkin asked for general consensus on the new members from the management committee, which concurred with the recommendations. Atkin noted that the membership subcommittee had agreed to consider new applicants at each CAC meeting, provided that application letters are received at least 30 days prior to a meeting. Atkin said that the CAC is looking to add new members, especially in Connecticut, to maintain a reasonable balance between New York and Connecticut membership representation. Robert Alpern asked about efforts to recruit NYC members. Atkin indicated that all qualified organizations are welcome to request membership on the CAC, and that the membership subcommittee would consider all applications received. Tom Morrissey asked John Atkin to send a letter to his attention requesting that the CTDEP watershed coordinators "talk up" CAC membership in their work with local watershed groups. Atkin indicated that he would forward the letter to CTDEP. Dick Draper reported that NYSDEC had received the CAC co-chair's letter concerning the Phase II storm water program in New York, and that NYSDEC is considering designation of the entire LIS watershed in the Phase II program, as the CAC had requested. (see Attachment 2 & 3 for CAC letter and NYSDEC reply) Tom Morrissey indicated that in Connecticut, approximately 100 of the 169 towns would be covered under the program, and that the CAC recommendation is currently under discussion in CTDEP. Paul Stacey advised that there are potential financial impacts on municipalities' programs under CZMA Section 6217 and CWA Section 319 if they are required to meet the Phase II storm water regulations, and that these impacts must be taken into consideration by the state in the overall Phase II designation process.

ACTION 1. John Atkin will send a letter to Tom Morrissey requesting that CTDEP watershed coordinators speak to their local groups on behalf of the CAC's membership recruitment efforts.

2. LIS Stewardship System

Carole Nemore, Rob Pirani, Robin Kriesberg, and Don Henne briefed the committee on progress in developing a strategy to establish a Long Island Sound Stewardship (reserve) System, as called for in the CCMP. Nemore reviewed the overall approach and strategy for establishing the stewardship system that has been developed by a work group coordinated by Audubon New York with LISS funding. The three components of the strategy are being developed around identification of ecologically significant areas, led by the FWS with LISS funding; a public outreach component led by Save the Sound with NY Community Trust funding; and identification of areas for public access and recreation, led by RPA with NY/CT funding. Don Henne discussed FWS progress in identifying ecologically significant areas; Rob Pirani described the process and methodology for identifying and assessing open space/public access sites; and Robin Kriesberg described four demonstration projects funded through a \$20,000 grant to Save the Sound from the New York Community Trust. Save the Sound is planning to hold six workshops in the fall for municipal officials, regional planning groups and other interested groups to obtain public input into the process and build upon the Listen to the Sound 2000 public meetings. Both FWS and RPA are developing detailed criteria for identifying potential sites for the system. The stewardship team partners expect to have a draft strategy in September for review by the management committee. Nancy Seligson emphasized that the strategy should specifically state the benefits of becoming part of the stewardship system. Dick Draper indicated that he liked the direction outlined by the team, but that September is not realistic for a public draft strategy. A significant amount of groundwork within NYSDEC and with other state agencies, such as the New York State Department of State and the New York State Department of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, is necessary to communicate and explain the concept before it goes public. Don Henne reported that the FWS refuge system and other FWS components need to be made aware of the effort. Dr. Larry Swanson emphasized the importance of explaining the stewardship system concept at the local level to groups such as land trusts. Site designations should be consistent with local priorities.

ACTION 2: The stewardship system team will take these concerns under advisement in future discussions and work products. [NB: In subsequent discussions, the team agreed, based on the management committee's comments, to provide a draft strategy document to the committee in September and not to release it to the public before receiving management committee approval.]

3. Science and Technical Advisory Committee (STAC)

Mark Tedesco reported on the status of formation of the new STAC. The management committee had approved \$50,000 in the 2003 LISS budget request for support for a new

STAC. Dr. R. Lawrence Swanson of the Waste Reduction and Management Institute at SUNY is the new New York co-chair along with Dr. Charles Yarish from UCONN Stamford. The funds will be used to support two Long Island Sound Scholars, one in each state, to assist the STAC in its mission. The LIS scholars will be post-graduate students who will work part time under the direction of the co-chairs. Tedesco asked for advice concerning the timing of the announcement for the interns. Dr. Ed Monahan advised to get the announcement out as soon as possible to coordinate with the start of the academic year. Students are seeking potential support at this time prior to the start of the school year. Tedesco reported that the STAC will consist of a core group of agency managers, engineers, scientists, researchers, academics, and other environmental professionals. Additional participants could be invited to specific work group meetings as issues warranted. Tedesco asked for input on committee membership. Representatives from the National Marine Fisheries Service and the Citizens Advisory Committee were suggested, as well as an additional industry representative from New York. Bob Alpern suggested creating a single STAC for the Hudson River Estuary Program, LISS, and NY/NJ Harbor Estuary program. Alpern suggested that the existing STACs would be addressing many of the same issues, such as impacts from global climate change. A single STAC would be able to look at crosscutting issues instead of each STAC acting alone. Dick Draper responded that the concept of one STAC for the region was not feasible due to the diversity of issues affecting the area from the Bight to the Sound, and just trying to arrange a meeting and agree on an agenda would be cumbersome and difficult. Invitation letters to potential STAC members will be sent out from the LISSO in the near future.

ACTION 3: Management Committee members should nominate representatives to the STAC from their agencies upon receipt of the invitation letter from the LISSO.

4. NPS Nitrogen Loads

John Mullaney of the US Geological Survey's Connecticut office briefed the committee on the recently issued report, *Estimation of Nitrogen Yields and Loads from Basins Draining to Long Island Sound, 1988-98* (Mullaney, Schwarz, Todd Trench). Monitoring data on total nitrogen concentrations and streamflow were used to estimate annual nonpoint nitrogen loads for 1988-98 at 28 monitoring sites and 26 unmonitored basins that drain to LIS. The estimated total nitrogen yields at monitoring sites were used with basin characteristics and ancillary data to develop a multiple-linear regression equation to estimate nonpoint nitrogen yields from monitored and unmonitored basins. The estimated nonpoint nitrogen load to LIS from the basins studied ranged from 21 million pounds in water year (October-September) 1995 to 50 million pounds in water year 1990. Mullaney indicated that the report is posted on the USGS website at <http://ct.water.usgs.gov/pubs.html>. For further information contact Mr. Mullaney at jmullane@usgs.gov.

5. LIS NPS Issues

Walter Smith reported that a meeting is being organized of key agency staff to discuss ways and means of 1) measuring the effects of management actions in reducing nonpoint source pollution consistent with the commitments in the nitrogen TMDL; and 2) supporting local watershed restoration efforts through training and technical assistance. It is hoped that the group can reach consensus on a course of action to recommend to the committee on how best to approach measuring and meeting the goals in the TMDL.

6. Updates

LIS 2002 Agreement. Tedesco reported that while discussions had taken place at higher levels in the states concerning signing of the LIS 2002 Agreement, an issue remained centering on the language in the May 28 version of the Agreement about dredging. Rod McNeil of NYSDOS reported that his agency had initially expressed concerns regarding EPA's approach to segmenting the Environmental Impact Statement process, but that after further discussions, the agency has decided to remove its objections to the language in the Agreement. As this was the final item at issue, it is possible to move forward to schedule a signing date. Connecticut has proposed that the signing ceremony be held at Avery Point in early October. Dick Draper indicated that this location may not attract adequate press coverage, and alternatives should be explored closer to the New York line. Michelle Sullivan, director of communications at CTDEP, has the lead on contacting the Governor's offices to finalize a date and location.

Invasive Species Workshop. The Massachusetts Bays NEP is sponsoring a workshop on invasive species at the New England Aquarium in Boston on November 14-15. Contact Shannon Weigle, of Mass Bays NEP, 251 Causeway Street, Suite 900, Boston, MA 02114; 617 626-1231; shannon.weigle@state.ma.us for further information.

Quality Communities Conference. The NYSDOS is sponsoring a conference on Quality Communities/Quality Coasts at the Empire State Plaza Egg and Convention Center, Albany, New York on October 22-23. For further information see their website at: www.dos.state.ny.us.

7. Sound Ideas Public Comment Period

Mark Tedesco opened the floor to public comment, recognizing Art Glowka. Glowka wondered how the LISS is going to move from hypoxia-based monitoring to ecologically-based monitoring, and how the LISS is doing on getting the FWS person on board. Glowka recommended getting an active fisherman on the STAC, for which he volunteered his services.

8. Wrap Up & October Agenda Items

Mark Tedesco advised that the next management committee meeting is scheduled for Thursday, October 17, 2002 in Stamford. Agenda topics suggested for the meeting included updates from the standing work groups. Management Committee members should submit suggestions for agenda topics to LISO by October 1. There being no other business, Tedesco adjourned the meeting at 2:45 PM.

List of Attachments

1. List of Attendees
2. June 26, 2002 CAC Letter to NYSDEC/CTDEP
3. July 18, 2002 NYSDEC Letter to CAC